

The University of Dublin
Trinity College

**Minutes of the College Safety Committee Meeting held on 24th February 2011 in the
College Board Room.**

Present:

Ms D. Kneafsey – Chief Operating Officer, Chair

Ms N. Murray – Board Representative

Ms O. Sheehan – Representative, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences Safety
Committee

Ms A. FitzGerald - Representative, Administration/Support Services Safety Committee

Dr D. McGrath – Medical Director, College Health Centre

Mr T. McMahon – Staff Secretary, Staff Office

Mr J. O’Byrne – Safety Representative, Buildings Office

Ms S. Fleming – Welfare Officer, Students Union

Ms D. Lawless – President, Graduate Student’s Union

Mr T. Merriman – Secretary, College Safety Officer (CSO)

Apologies:

Ms V. Butler - Representative, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Sciences Safety
Committee

Dr E. Doorly – Representative of the College Radiological Protection Safety Committee (RPO)

Mr P. Mangan – Director of Buildings

In attendance: Ms C. Coyne, Director of Buildings Office

Section A

Minutes

SA/10-11/14 - The minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2010 were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

The matters arising from the minutes were discussed and have been recorded below (see Minutes SA/10-11/15 and SA/10-11/16)

SA/10-11/15 – Establishment of the College Chemical Safety Committee

The College Safety Officer reported that some discussion had taken place with the School of Chemistry regarding the nomination of a chair for this sub-committee but, partly because of the prolonged leave of the College Specialist Chemical Hazard Officer, no nomination has been made. It was agreed that the matter is appropriate for discussion at the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science Committee and Ms. Butler will put this on the agenda for its next meeting due to take place on the 1st March 2011.

SA/10-11/16 – Legacy Chemicals Issue

Since the last meeting the Chief Operating Office has agreed to proposals made by the College Safety Officer for the disposal of legacy waste chemicals currently stored in two areas in the East End of College and funding for this project is being made available through the Office of the COO. It is expected that these chemicals will be disposed of before the end of this academic year.

The Committee agreed that similar build-ups of chemical waste in the future should be avoided and in this regard the decanting of laboratories and other areas to the new Biosciences Building should be carried out in accordance with the College Protocol on Decanting of Laboratories/Workshops. The Chief Operating Officer undertook to bring this to the attention of the Biosciences Committee.

It was agreed that the Hazardous Materials Facility should continue its programme of scheduled waste disposal and target particular chemicals on occasions. The Safety Office will institute a programme of audits in laboratories and workshops in the next academic year aimed at identifying, with the local responsible person, surplus and waste chemicals for recycling or disposal.

It was noted that the School of Chemistry has a policy requiring postgraduates to certify that they have safely disposed of all hazardous materials before they are awarded their degree. The Committee agreed that this policy should be extended to all Schools and that a similar policy in respect of retiring staff should be established. The Staff Secretary has agreed to give this some consideration.

Section – B

SA/10-11/17 – Approval of Terms of Reference for the Administrative/Support Services Safety Committee

The Terms of Reference for the Administrative/Support Services Safety Committee were approved by the Committee.

SA/10-11/18 – Health & Safety Audit – update on progress

The College Safety Officer tabled a report on the audit carried out by the Health & Safety Authority in October/November 2010. The inspection was carried out over 4 full days and involved one generalist inspector for 3 days and a specialist hazardous materials inspector for one day. Eight formal 'Reports of Inspection', pointing to inadequacies in specific areas were issued by the HSA. There were three further areas where no formal reports were issued and where the inspectors had positive comments to make on their systems. The College Safety Officer has formally responded to the Health and Safety Authority on these reports.

The main points of concern included the inadequacy or unavailability of written risk assessments/safety statements in some areas, machine risk assessments not being specific

to individual machines and some comments on the absence of handrails and edge protection on some publicly-accessible buildings in College.

Following the audit the Buildings Office appointed an external consultant to review and update their 'working at height' policy and procedures. The Director of Buildings has undertaken to appoint a consultant to advise on the heritage and conservation aspects of fitting handrails and edge protection to external areas of protected structures in the west end of College.

In response to a query the College Safety Officer confirmed that a number of workshops on safety statements and risk assessments are planned for early June 2011 to assist staff who have responsibility for drawing up these documents.

In response to queries from Dr McGrath the College Safety Officer confirmed that these reports of inspections are accessible under FOI. Dr McGrath suggested that this should give added impetus to the need to move forward quickly on issues highlighted by the HSA.

Section – C

SA/10-11/19 – Report from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Studies Safety Committee

No meeting has taken place since the last College Safety Committee meeting. The next meeting is due to take place in March 2011.

SA/10-11/20 – Report from the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science Safety Committee.

Ms Butler had conveyed her apologies for her absence to the Committee and no report was presented. The next meeting is due to take place on 1st March 2011.

SA/10-11/21 – Report from the Faculty of Health Sciences Safety Committee

No report has been received for the Faculty of Health Science Safety Committee.

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SA/10-11/22 – Minutes of the meeting of the College Radiological Safety Committee held on the 5th November 2010

Minutes of the meeting of the Radiation Safety Committee which took place on the 5th November 2010 were circulated. A further meeting took place on the 18th February 2011. In the absence of the Radiological Safety Officer the College Safety Officer reported that, thanks to funding made available by the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science, it was possible to successfully dispose of a significant amount of redundant radioactive sources/materials through an external contractor or legally to the public drains. There are ongoing issues with the relocation of the Irradiator to the Biosciences Building being discussed.

SA/10-11/23 – Draft minutes of the Administrative/Support Services Safety committee meeting dated 13 December 2010

The Chair of this committee reported that the next meeting is scheduled for March 2nd 2011. Currently there is an audit of safety statements being carried out in the Administrative/Support Areas.

SA/10-11/24 – Report from the Biosafety Committee

The draft policy on disposal of Biological Waste was due to be discussed. However, as the representative of the College Biosafety Committee was not present this item has been deferred to the next meeting of the College Safety Committee.

SA/10-11/25 - A.O.B

The College Safety Officer informed the Committee that the College Safety Office has updated the 'Pregnant Employee Policy' and produced a pregnant employee risk assessment template. This is available on the College Safety webpage. He further reported that the Facilities Emergency Response Procedures have been recently updated.

Some concern was expressed as to whether there were adequate emergency response protocols in place to deal with adverse weather conditions. The weather in December 2010 had caused difficulties for students accessing study facilities on campus. The COO indicated that a response committee had met regularly during the bad weather spell and made decisions based on the dynamic weather conditions. Some additional equipment has since

been purchased to enhance our snow clearing capability and a review of responses was underway to improve our future responses.

Ms Sheehan brought the issue of smoking to the Committees attention, in particular, complaints that there are still large groups of people congregating outside the Arts building and smoke is entering offices through open windows and doors. This has also been experienced in other parts of College.

The committee was reminded that it had rejected proposals, in February 2010, for an amended policy that would prohibit smoking in an external 'exclusion zone' around openable doors and windows.

The COO suggested that this be revisited at the next meeting.

SA/10-11/26 – Next Meeting

The next College Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for, May 19th 2011, at 2.00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Ms D. Kneafsey, Chair
Chief Operating Officer